

VISTA State Progress Report

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Project Name: AmeriCorps VISTA North Texas

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Grant Number: 13VSWTX015

Period Covered by this Report:

From: 11/30/2014 to 08/20/2016

Application ID: 15VS185973

Member Development

	Member Development Information	AmeriCorps VISTA Members
1	On-Site Orientation	191
2	Community Outreach	74
3	Community Volunteer Generation/Recruitment	75
4	Effective Volunteer Management	87
5	Resource Mapping	103
6	Resource Development/Fundraising	193
7	Grant Writing	146
8	Organizational Development	497
9	Performance Measures	6
10	Tracking Systems	13
11	Information Technology	73
12	Developing On-Site Orientations and Training Plans	39
13	Other (Please Specify)	293

Demographics

	Demographic Information	Value
1	# of community volunteers recruited during the reporting period	736.00
5	# of community volunteers managed during the reporting period	821.00
2	# of Service Hours performed by Community Volunteers who were recruited	2,188.00
6	# of Service Hours performed by Community Volunteers who were managed	3,609.00
3	Dollar value of cash resources leveraged during the reporting period	631,982.00
4	Dollar value of in-kind resources leveraged during the reporting period	126,400.00

Narratives

Challenges

beyond scope of request

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Recruitment and Support

beyond scope of request

The VISTA Leader is instrumental in growing the VISTA North Texas' online presence through social media accounts; Facebook and Twitter. She has grown the project's Facebook and Twitter pages with frequent and relevant content regarding the VISTA North Texas Project, local, state and national events and poverty related stories. All current service listings are available on the VISTA North Texas website with the links to the AmeriCorps Portal and instructions for applying.

The VISTA Project Director and VISTA Leader are available to answer requests for assistance from applicants as they transition to VISTA service. During the screening process, all of the benefits are thoroughly covered with each applicant. Upon request for further information, documents from the VISTA Campus or the VISTA Member Handbook are sent via email to the applicant. The information most often requested is relocation to serve, health care or child care benefit packages.

New VISTA members attend On-Site Orientation and Training (OSOT) where they receive information pertinent to the VISTA North Texas project. During OSOT, the project director ensures each new VISTA member understands how the project operates, where to go for help, and reporting requirements while they are in service. Questions and concerns are answered so that the VISTAs can have a smooth transition to their service site.

In order to ensure a smooth transition between outgoing and incoming VISTA members, the VISTA Leader ensures the outgoing VISTA is keeping good records and documents pertinent information to pass to the incoming VISTA. Sub-site supervisors are required to provide a thorough on-site orientation once the incoming VISTA begins service to make the transition into service as smooth as possible.

Training/Technical Assistance Needs

No training or technical assistance is needed at this time. When questions arise, the Project Director and the VISTA Leader will first visit the VISTA Campus for answers. For more technical questions or concerns, the Program Officer is contacted.

Partnership/Collaboration Development

Organizations partnering with the AmeriCorps VISTA North Texas Project by hosting a VISTA member during the grant period include beyond scope of request

Woman to Woman Pregnancy Resource Center, beyond scope of request

In November 2016, the VISTA North Texas Project will welcome three new VISTA sites; beyond scope of request

The Project Director has cultivated a relationship with the Executive Director of Volunteer McKinney. Volunteer McKinney has partnerships with over 130 non-profit agencies in Collin County Texas. The VISTA North Texas project participates in Volunteer McKinney's quarterly leadership coffee where the project director and VISTA Leader network with executive directors of nonprofits and other community leaders. Volunteer McKinney allows the VISTA North Texas project to advertise all current service listings on their list serve. Occasionally, Volunteer McKinney hosts trainings on volunteer management and recruitment. All VISTA North Texas members are able to attend these training for little to no cost. The project director passes on information from Volunteer McKinney to the VISTA members as it becomes available.

On October 22, 2015, the VISTA North Texas project hosted a Community Solutions Hunger Summit to commemorate the VISTA 50th Anniversary. Christian Community Action (CCA) donated the space for the summit as well as tables, chairs, staging and audio visual equipment. The keynote speaker for the event was Atif Bostic, Executive Director of UpLift Solutions. He spoke about the innovation and success they have had eliminating food deserts and empowering those with food insecurity in their community. The panel discussion featured community leaders who shared insights into the food insecurity issues among the diverse populations they serve. Panelist for the event included Atif Bostic, ED UpLift Solutions, Dr. Maureen McGuinness, UNT Dean of Students, Kristen Keeth, Senior Services Manager of SPAN, Inc./Meals on Wheels of Denton County, Michelle DeGrate, Vice President of Programs Christian Community Action, Danielle Betters, Senior Intake Case Manager Cornerstone Assistance Network, Jamey Kirby, Grants Coordinator City of Lewisville, Danielle Shaw, Human Services Coordinator City of Denton. Denton County Commissioner Bobbie Mitchell spoke about food insecurity issues facing Denton County. The VISTA North Texas project also partnered with the Cornerstone Assistance Network VISTA project who donated refreshments for the event.

Throughout the grant period, the VISTA North Texas project has partnered with community nonprofit agencies for service projects. VISTA North Texas members have participated in Keep Denton Beautiful's annual clean-up day, Giving Hope, Inc.'s 100K Homes project and the annual Point in Time count.

Resource Development

beyond scope of request

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beyond
beyond scope of request

Woman to Woman Pregnancy Resource Center- During the grant period, VISTA members recruited 215 new volunteers and managed 264 volunteers who served a total 1647 hours at the agency's resale store, Twice As Nice and fundraising events. The VISTAs assisted their agency by helping to raise \$161,301 through fundraising events, such as the annual banquet and North Texas Giving Day. Proceeds raised will assist with funding of education programs and free medical services to uninsured and economically disadvantaged women and families in Denton, TX.

beyond scope of request

Sustainability

As an intermediary project, our goal is to support the AmeriCorps VISTA members and their agencies as they develop and build projects that will allow for the transition away from AmeriCorps VISTA resources. The VISTA Leader and Project Director assist the VISTA members as much as possible to overcome challenges and give support needed through education, training and team building activities. Contact is made with site supervisors by the Project Director to ensure the VISTA member and the Site Supervisor have the tools necessary to have a successful project. In order to grow and sustain the AmeriCorps VISTA North Texas Project, we will actively engage and educate non-profit and government agencies in Denton, Collin, Wise, Grayson and Cooke Counties about the AmeriCorps VISTA program.

Each VISTA is required to ensure the information for all of the projects worked on are organized in computer and/or hard copy files and that contact information for all of the important people/businesses worked with are accessible to the agency staff and the next VISTA member who will be serving. Additionally, VISTA members keep notes from workshops, trainings, and webinars and save them as a resource for the next VISTA.

Multi-Site Program Management and Performance

The Project Director and VISTA Leader meet regularly with the VISTA members to ensure all projects are moving forward and to give the VISTA members the support needed to complete their VADs. VISTA members participate in service projects to facilitate team building and to learn how to support each other to accomplish goals. Past service projects were coordinated with other VISTA projects in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, such as Big Brothers Big Sisters VISTA project and Refugee Services of Texas. The VISTA Leader has also implemented "VISTA Meet-Ups", social activities to get to know each other in a non-work environment.

The VISTA members complete and submit timesheets and monthly reports to the VISTA Leader. The VISTA Leader reads the reports to check for progress at each site as well as to assess any needs the VISTA member may have. The VISTA Leader compiles the reports and posts them on the shared drive for the Project Director to review for the Progress Reports. Any issues or clarification needed are addressed each month so that support is given quickly.

The project director is in contact every two weeks via email with the sub-site supervisors to ensure the VISTA member is in service and that there are no issues or concerns with the VISTA member.

The Project Director makes site visits to each agency hosting an AmeriCorps VISTA member. Every VISTA member and VISTA supervisor is aware that they may contact the Project Director via phone at the office Monday-Friday 9 am to 4 pm, by cell phone on the weekends and after office hours or through email. The VISTA Leader is also available to offer support and resources on an as needed basis.

Other Accomplishments

beyond scope of request

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beyond scope of request

Stories

beyond scope of request

VISTA Ex. 6 Successfully Recruits Volunteers

The Volunteer Recruitment and Development VISTA at Woman to Woman Pregnancy Resource Center is focused on educating the community on the volunteer needs of the agency. Ex. 6 developed Volunteer Information Meetings for anyone in the community interested in learning about the organization and the volunteering opportunities are available. At the Volunteer Information Meetings, Ex. 6 passionately explains the services Woman To Woman offers and how an individual can play a role in the positive impact the agency is making in the Denton community. In March, Ex. 6 contacted over 50 potential volunteers, 17 of whom attended a Volunteer Information Meeting. Out of those 17, 10 became weekly volunteers and have contributed 50 hours of service to Woman To Woman. Volunteers are the life blood of the organization so this a major stride and success for Ex. 6.

beyond scope of request

VISTA Ex. 6 Develops Policies and Procedures for Sustainability

As a Logistics VISTA at Woman to Woman Pregnancy Resource Center, Ex. 6's job is to create policy and procedures that will be continued in the future and will help create sustainable processes. Ex. 6 created a Toy Department and Book Department policy that will be used in the warehouse to help train and create standard operation procedures. This year, she plans to finish all departments to create a warehouse and store legacy book that will be utilized after the VISTA program is gone. She was also able to use her FEMA Corps training to help create a new Fire Escape Route that will be used from now on. She also updated and created new incident forms that will be used in case of any emergency.

Attachments and Links

beyond scope of request

Performance Measures

Performance Measures Progress

Christian Community Action

PM 27 - Capacity Building & Leverage - Scale/Reach - Full Time - 1

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Woman to Woman Pregnancy Resource Center

PM 19 - Capacity Building & Leverage - Scale/Reach - Full Time - 1

Measure Type	Measure	Target	Actual	Progress
Output	(PRIORITY) G3-3.1: Number of community volunteers recruited by organizations or participants	35	215	614.29 %
Outcome	(PRIORITY) G3-3.3: Number of organizations implementing effective volunteer management practices	1	1	100.00 %
# of Full time VISTAS		4	4	100.00 %

Focus Area -	Measure Type	Measure	Target	Actual	Progress
Healthy Futures - Access to Care	Anti-Poverty Output	H1: Number of uninsured, econ disadv individuals utilizing health care services/programs	0	0	0.00 %
Healthy Futures - Access to Care	Anti-Poverty Outcome	Number of clients receiving health care services.	0	0	0.00 %
Healthy Futures - Access to Care	# of Full time VISTAS		4	4	100.00 %

Sponsor Note

Woman to Woman Pregnancy Resource Center hosts 4 VISTA projects: Volunteer Recruitment and Development VISTA, New Volunteer Training VISTA, Logistics VISTA and Grants VISTA. During the reporting period, the VISTA members have recruited 215 new volunteers who have served 544 hours at Woman to Woman Twice as Nice Resale store. The Volunteer Recruitment and New Volunteer Training VISTAs are tasked with expanding and enhancing the current volunteer program through the evaluation and revising of existing policies and procedures. The VISTAs interviewed volunteers and staff, reviewed past policies and procedures and designed a volunteer checklist that will be implemented at Twice as Nice Resale Store, the agency's fundraising arm. They continue to develop volunteer training. They have completed two new training seminars for the volunteers serving at the agency's Twice As Nice Resale store. The book department training and the bomb threat and terroristic activity training are equipped with activities and quizzes to test and gauge volunteers' understanding of these two areas. The training seminars will instill a sense of confidence and ownership in the volunteers and will aid them to find proper solutions to stressful circumstances.

The Logistics VISTA's job is to create policy and procedures that will be continued on in the future and will help create sustainable processes. She has created a Toy Department and Book Department policy to be used in the warehouse and standard operation procedures to help train volunteers and is working to finish policies for all store departments. She continues to develop health and safety policy and procedures, such as a fire escape plan, Bomb Threat Procedure, Natural Disaster Procedures, Evacuation Procedure and a new Injury/Accident Form. In order to disseminate safety policy to volunteers, the VISTA implemented daily safety briefs that include new topics every week.

The VISTAs play an integral role in the agency's fundraisers and events. They are responsible for recruiting and training volunteers needed as well as developing the social media marketing for each event. Once trained, these volunteers take ownership over the tasks set before them. Through the efforts of the VISTA members, the agency has raised \$161,301 through fundraising activities and garnered \$300 in in-kind donations. Monies raised help Woman to Woman offer free health services to low-income women in Denton County.

Anti-Poverty Measures: Since August 2015, Woman to Woman Pregnancy Resource Center has assisted 1,169 women receive health care services. This number represents first time visits only and does not include follow-up visits.

Youth and Family Counseling

PM 21 - Capacity Building & Leverage - Scale/Reach - Full Time - 1